



# STREAM Newsletter

Issue 5

Study on Transitions in Employment, Ability and Motivation

*Theme: Personal Resources and Sustainable Employability*

## What is STREAM?

STREAM is a **four-year longitudinal study** with annual measurements among persons **aged 45-64** in the Netherlands. Participants fill in an online questionnaire on topics such as: health, work, knowledge and skills, social circumstances, and financial situation.

More than **12,000 employees, 1,000 self-employed persons, and 2,000 non-employed persons** participated at baseline. In the second measurement 82% of the original participants participated, in the third measurement this was 80%, and in the fourth measurement 74%.

For data collection an existing Intomart GfK internet panel is used. For 89% of baseline participants, **data linkage** with information from **Statistics Netherlands** is possible.

To obtain addition insight, **qualitative studies** have been and will be conducted among STREAM participants.

STREAM is being conducted by **TNO**, in close collaboration with the **VU Medical Center** and the **Erasmus MC**.



### STREAM TNO STAFF:

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### IN COLLABORATION WITH:

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## Health, coping style, and work ability

In a recent study conducted with two waves of STREAM data, the associations of poor mental health, and physical health, and different forms of copying style on work ability in employees was explored. Poor mental health and especially poor physical health at baseline related to lower work ability at one-year follow-up. Persons with an active and a non-avoidant coping style had higher work ability than persons with a non-active and an avoidant coping style. We also tested whether certain favorable coping styles, i.e. active, non-avoidant, and seeking support, buffered the associations between poor mental and physical health and low work ability, these interactions were however only marginally significant. The promotion of good employee health and favorable coping strategies can be applied in interventions aimed at promoting high work ability and essentially sustained employability.

*See reference van de Vijfeijke et al., 2013 in Selection of Publications below.*

**STREAM is interested in (inter)national and multidisciplinary collaborations to conduct innovative research with practical implications. Contact us for possible partnerships!**

**More information on STREAM is available at:**

[www.tno.nl/STREAM](http://www.tno.nl/STREAM)

**Contact:** [infostream@tno.nl](mailto:infostream@tno.nl)

## Work engagement, work-related factors, and health

Work engagement, defined as “a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind” (Schaufeli et al., 2006), has been identified as an important factor for well-being and health. In a recent STREAM study the role of work engagement and psychosocial work-related factors (i.e., psychological job demands, autonomy, and social support) and physical work load in determining mental and physical health in employees during one-year follow-up was assessed. Furthermore, whether work engagement buffered the influence of unfavourable work-related factors on health was explored.

We found that unfavourable psychosocial work-related factors were related to poorer mental health during the follow-up. Both higher physical work load and unfavourable psychosocial factors (i.e., higher psychological job demands and lower autonomy) at baseline were related to poorer physical health during the follow-up. Work engagement was related to both mental and physical health; but especially a higher work engagement at baseline was related to better mental health during the one-year follow-up. Our hypothesis that a high work engagement could buffer the relation between unfavourable work-related factors and health was only weakly supported. We conclude that especially the promotion of a high work engagement can be beneficial for the physical, and in particular, the mental health of older workers.

See reference Leijten et al., 2014 in Selection of Publications.

## Upcoming Events

- ICOH WOPS 2014: International Congress for Occupational Health and Work Organisation and Psychosocial Factors. Adelaide, Australia September 17-19, 2014.  
*Contribution STREAM: Oral presentation Fenna Leijten.*

## Selection of Publications

- \*Gründermann R, Ybema JF, Sanders J. “Work values of low-skilled older workers [Dutch: Werkwaarden van laagopgeleide oudere werknemers]” *Gedrag & Organisatie*. **2014**;2:117-138.
- Leijten FRM, van den Heuvel SG, van der Beek AJ, Ybema JF, Robroek SJW, Burdorf A. “Associations of work-related factors and work engagement with mental and physical health: a 1-year follow-up study among older workers”. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. **2014**;online first. [LINK](#)
- \*Leijten FRM, van den Heuvel SG, Ybema JF, van der Beek AJ, Robroek SJ, Burdorf A. “The influence of chronic health problems on work ability and productivity at work: a longitudinal study among older employees”. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*. **2014**;40:473-82. [LINK](#)
- Münderlein M, Ybema JF, Koster F. “Happily ever after? Explaining turnover and retirement intentions of older workers in the Netherlands”. *Career Development International*. **2013**;18:548-568. [LINK](#)
- van de Vijfeijke H, Leijten FRM, Ybema JF, van den Heuvel SG, Robroek SJW, van der Beek AJ, Burdorf A, Taris TW. “Differential Effects of Mental and Physical Health and Coping Style on Work Ability”. *Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine*. **2013**;55:1238-1243. [LINK](#)
- de Wind A, Geuskens GA, Reeuwijk KG, Westerman MJ, Ybema JF, Burdorf A, Bongers PM, van der Beek AJ. “Pathways through which health influences early retirement: a qualitative study”. *BMC Public Health*. **2013**;13:292. [LINK](#)
- de Wind A, Geuskens GA, Ybema JF, Blatter BM, Burdorf A, Bongers PM, van der Beek AJ. “Health, job characteristics, skills, and social and financial factors in relation to early retirement – results from a longitudinal study in the Netherlands”. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*. **2013**;40:186-94. [LINK](#)
- Ybema JF, Geuskens GA, van den Heuvel SG, de Wind A, Leijten FRM, Joling C, Blatter BM, Burdorf A, van der Beek AJ, Bongers PM. “Study on Transitions in Employment, Ability and Motivation (STREAM): The Design of a Four-year Longitudinal Cohort Study among 15,118 Persons Aged 45 to 64 Years”. *British Journal of Medicine & Medical Research*. **2014**;4:1383-99. [LINK](#)

\*newly added to the list